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August 11, 2011

Mayor and Council of Rockville
111 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Draft

Dear Mayor Marcuccio and Councilmembers:

The Historic District Commission would like to add its support for the Draft Culture and Entertainment Plan. This Plan clearly recognizes that Rockville's historic resources are a cultural attraction for local residents and visitors alike. We are pleased to note the inclusion of our historic resources as an integral feature of this plan.

We also note that the Draft Culture and Entertainment Plan lays out a plan of action that is similar to the Heritage Area Plan Amendment currently being drafted by historic preservation staff. It is heartening to see strong city support for the concept of promoting our cultural and entertainment resources to both residents and visitors.

We anticipate the inclusion of the Culture and Entertainment Plan as an addendum to the Heritage Area Application, which will be presented to the Mayor and Council in 2012 for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Janet Hunt-McCool, HDC Chair

cc: Historic District Commission
Susan Swift, Director, Community Planning and Development Services

**City of Rockville
Culture and Entertainment Plan**

**DRAFT for
Public Comment**

June 14, 2011

City of Rockville Culture and Entertainment Plan

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Introduction

Rockville has long valued culture and entertainment as integral elements of its community and understands that by developing these resources, Rockville can become a preferred destination. Rockville is justifiably regarded as one of America's leading small cities for work, for play and for life. It is the vibrant, highly educated, business-friendly home to some of the nation's and the world's most prominent biomed and technology companies and is blessed by proximity to the resources of the world's most powerful city, Washington, D.C. Rockville's prominence is reflected in recognition as:

- No. 31 of the Top 100 Best Places to Live by *Money Magazine*
- An Editor's Pick in *U.S. News and World Report* as one of America's Best Places to Retire
- In the Top 10 of cities in the nation to start a new company by Bloomberg's *Businessweek*
- No. 8 in America's Top 25 Towns To Live Well by *Forbes Magazine*

Rockville is a city that remembers and reveres its roots, its commitment to citizen-centric public service, to the planet and to the connectivity of its neighborhoods and residents. Rockville's culture and entertainment should reflect these values. By carefully developing a cultural environment that reflects our unique position as a community that has a hometown feeling while at the same time possesses world class amenities, we can become a destination for businesses, new residents and visitors.

The purpose of the Culture and Entertainment Plan is to create the framework necessary to build on Rockville's existing array of culture and entertainment resources in order to:

- Make the community a premier destination
- Enhance the economic vitality of the community
- Increase community pride and identity
- Improve quality of life
- Increase opportunities for individual growth
- Commemorate local values, history and progress
- Preserve and enrich the character of the community
- Facilitate collaborative relationships among for-profit and nonprofit community resources
- Create an environment for creativity to thrive

Understanding the Plan

The Culture and Entertainment Plan establishes goals, objectives and recommendations to make Rockville a destination, meet the needs of the City's diverse population, raise awareness and participation, and establish support for culture and entertainment. The phrase "culture and entertainment" is used throughout the Plan to refer collectively to all aspects of culture, including arts, entertainment, recreation, heritage, and science and technology.

Culture is the knowledge of our heritage. This includes the history of people and places, activities past and present, communications, values and our understanding of the world via the arts and sciences.

Entertainment is the engagement of the mind through activities of personal choice. This may be a passive individual diversion during some leisure time or a shared experience at a concert, festival, sports event or other activity that brings people together. For this plan, much of what is understood to be recreation today is viewed here as entertainment.

The arts are a vast subdivision of culture, composed of many creative endeavors and disciplines. The arts encompass original expressions in the visual arts, literary arts and the performing arts - music, theatre, dance and film, among others.

Heritage refers to something inherited from the past. Natural heritage refers to an inheritance of fauna and flora, geology, landscape and landforms, and other natural resources. Cultural heritage refers to the legacy of physical artifacts, such as buildings, historic places, natural places, monuments, artifacts, etc., and intangible attributes of a group or society, including social values and traditions, customs and practices, and other aspects of human activity. These places and activities authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present that are considered significant to the archaeology, art, architecture, science or technology of a specific culture.

Implementation of the Plan

The City initiated this plan by identifying all the culture and entertainment resources in the community. That included resources provided, operated and funded by the City of Rockville, non-profit organizations, and for profit entities. As a next step, culture and entertainment providers and other stakeholders shared their vision and goals for the future through focus groups and surveys.

City staff and a citizen committee appointed by the Mayor and Council also took the lead to prepare this document, using the input and guidance provided by the community stakeholders. Rockville residents, business representatives and culture and entertainment providers were invited to comment on a draft plan and their suggestions are incorporated in this final document.

While this is the City of Rockville plan, the plan aims to create a partnership among all culture and entertainment organizations in order to achieve the goals and objectives. Leveraging the resources, talents and insights of all the community stakeholders along with the City government is one key to successful implementation. Support through policy making, committed and focused leadership, and a wide range of community tools and resources is critical.

Upon approval by the Mayor and Council, City staff will reach out to the culture and entertainment organizations and other interested stakeholders to begin the partnership that will lead to successful implementation of the goals, objectives and recommendations in the plan. The partners will participate in developing specific action plans for each objective that include:

- What will be accomplished
- Who will be responsible for accomplishing it
- What resources are needed
- How long it will take
- What are the performance targets

This plan focuses on the longer term, strategic goals the City of Rockville hopes to achieve based on input from stakeholders. It does not identify specific roles and responsibilities or other needed resources. Those specifics will be incorporated in the action plans to be developed annually. The pace and approach to implementation of this plan will depend on the resources available through the City Operating and Capital Improvements budget, and funding by other organizations.

Strategic Plan Elements

The following terms are used throughout the plan:

- Vision – The dream of what you want to be. Vivid mental image of the Rockville community in its full and optimized maturation. *next step into the future.*
- Mission – Statement of the commitment to what you do now. Broad description of the community's role—what it does, with/for whom, its distinctive competence, and why; the ultimate end.
- Strategic Plan – Set of Goals and Objectives that are intended to help move the organization toward its Vision; working through its mission,
- Goals – Broad statements of what the community hopes to achieve in the next ten years, focused on outcomes or results and qualitative in nature.
- Objectives – Specific actions and policies to be implemented. Projected state of affairs that an organization plans, and intends to achieve within a finite time.

City of Rockville Culture and Entertainment Plan

Vision Statement for Culture and Entertainment in Rockville

In ten years, Rockville will be better known as a significant destination for culture and entertainment and offer a myriad of options that appeal to its diverse population and visitors. The community at large will understand that culture and entertainment opportunities are vital to the quality of life and well-being all of its residents and visitors and to its economy. Rockville will take pride in its community engagement, strong partnership programs and collaborative approach to raise participation, awareness and support for culture and entertainment opportunities. Rockville will continue to create new visions based on the success of its arts, entertainment, recreation, heritage, and science and technology.

Mission Statement for Culture and Entertainment in Rockville

To celebrate and sustain Rockville's diversity and vitality through exceptional culture and entertainment opportunities and collaborations.

1. Goal - Cultivate Rockville as a Destination for Culture and Entertainment

Ensure Rockville is a destination for culture and entertainment to the benefit of its citizens, its creative community, its business sector and its visitors. Culture and entertainment programming and amenities distinguish Rockville from other communities in the region. The unique and innovative opportunities provided by the arts, entertainment, recreation, heritage, and strong science and technology presence are leveraged.

1.1. Objective - Consider culture and entertainment in all aspects of city planning and operations, including economic development, land use, and facilities

Recommendations

- 1.1.1. Continue to protect, enhance, manage and develop city facilities for culture and entertainment
- 1.1.2. Support and advocate for adequate community-based facilities to provide office, meeting, rehearsal, exhibition and performance spaces for community-based groups
- 1.1.3. Preserve parks, natural spaces and historic sites for culture and entertainment activities
- 1.1.4. Integrate the goal of making Rockville a destination in the development and implementation of neighborhood plans, master plans, bikeway plans, parks/recreation/open space plans
- 1.1.5. Use the annual operating budget and Capital Improvements Plan to implement the goal of making Rockville a destination
- 1.1.6. Establish accountability criteria for evaluating the financial impact of programs, incorporating fact-based, data-driven criteria when possible

1.2. Objective - Strategically plan programming that will bring people to Rockville

Recommendations

- 1.2.1. Develop criteria to evaluate all programming in order to ensure that it is contributing to Rockville as a destination.
- 1.2.2. Enhance opportunities for all ages to participate in culture and entertainment events and activities, ranging from playing on an athletic team to attending events
- 1.2.3. Integrate culture and entertainment programming into public and private venues in different parts of Rockville, including the civic center, community centers, parks, streets, and open spaces
- 1.2.4. Foster the continued growth of Hometown Holidays and other city-sponsored events
- 1.2.5. Support Town Center as a community culture and entertainment destination
- 1.2.6. Identify opportunities to reflect the science and technology sector in programs and offerings

1.3. Objective - Safeguard and promote Rockville's heritage and use of heritage resources

Recommendations

- 1.3.1. Encourage preservation, adaptive re-use and stewardship of buildings, attractions, architectural styles, patterns of development and sites that reflect Rockville's history
- 1.3.2. Conserve natural areas important to the community's character, environment and quality of life
- 1.3.3. Use membership in the Montgomery County Heritage Area program to secure funds and promote Rockville's heritage and heritage resources

2. Goal - Enhance Accessible Programming for Rockville's Diverse Population

Culture and entertainment programming in Rockville meets the interests of the diverse population, including the wide range of ethnicities and ages in our community. The programming is also accessible to people with disabilities and those with lower incomes.

2.1. Objective - Increase ethnic diversity of culture and entertainment opportunities

Recommendations

- 2.1.1. Facilitate festivals and celebrations throughout the community that reflect our diverse populations
- 2.1.2. Involve diverse populations in the planning and implementation of activities that highlight Rockville as a cultural destination
- 2.1.3. Create and communicate cultural and entertainment opportunities to effectively reach the city's diverse population

2.2. Objective - Ensure that culture and entertainment programs are accessible to all ages and socio-economic populations

Recommendations

- 2.2.1. Cultivate opportunities for all ages for creative learning, self-expression, social development and constructive community engagement
- 2.2.2. Make programs accessible to low-income residents by offering scholarships and no- or low-cost opportunities
- 2.2.3. Enhance accessibility for senior citizens by offering programs and events at venues and in formats convenient to seniors
- 2.2.4. Assure that programs are accessible to people with disabilities and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

3. Goal - Raise Awareness of and Participation in Rockville's Culture and Entertainment Opportunities

Rockville collaborates with stakeholders to coordinate programming, communication, outreach and promotion of culture and entertainment opportunities to increase citizen and

visitor participation. Stakeholders promote awareness among government, businesses and the public that culture and entertainment resources are integral to a strong economy and quality of life.

3.1. Objective - Build partnerships to ensure that Rockville is recognized as a center of excellence for arts, entertainment, recreation, heritage, and science and technology.

Recommendations

- 3.1.1. Coordinate stakeholders to establish an organization to lead the coordination, planning and promotions of culture and entertainment providers
- 3.1.2. Create a reputation as a culture and entertainment destination in collaboration with partners in public, nonprofit and private sectors within Rockville and across the region
- 3.1.3. Facilitate collaboration, scheduling, and co-marketing among citywide and regional public, nonprofit and private organizations
- 3.1.4. Partner with the local universities and colleges, public schools and science and technology sector to ensure Rockville is recognized as a center of excellence

3.2. Objective - Promote Rockville's culture and entertainment locally, regionally and nationally

Recommendations

- 3.2.1. Include culture and entertainment opportunities and resources in the City of Rockville strategic marketing plan
- 3.2.2. Coordinate with stakeholders to create and to implement detailed marketing strategies specifically for culture and entertainment opportunities and resources in Rockville
- 3.2.3. Utilize the Internet for cost-effective and timely information sharing, including the development of one comprehensive online culture and entertainment website and calendar that lists all offerings in Rockville
- 3.2.4. Ensure that all ages and Rockville's ethnicities are incorporated in marketing and promotional materials

3.3. Objective - Foster economic development through culture and entertainment

Recommendations

- 3.3.1. Educate government, businesses and the public about the value, economic impact and economic development opportunities that arise from culture and entertainment
- 3.3.2. Promote culture and entertainment as critical to encouraging the creativity and innovation necessary for the community's academic and workplace success
- 3.3.3. Connect with and utilize scientific and technical organizations that contribute to the creativity of the community
- 3.3.4. Use arts, entertainment, recreation, heritage, and science and technology activities to attract visitors and increase economic activity

4. Goal - Develop Sustainable Support for Culture and Entertainment

Establish predictable, sustainable funding to assist Rockville in maintaining and enhancing a unique and vibrant culture and entertainment environment that will continue to deliver both economic and non-economic benefits to the community.

4.1. Objective - Provide leadership, advocacy and guidance to sustain financial support

Recommendations

- 4.1.1. Coordinate with stakeholders to develop and implement a strategic plan to secure sustainable funding for culture and entertainment
- 4.1.2. Use the Recreation and Parks Foundation to build increased community leadership and financial support for culture and entertainment
- 4.1.3. Use the Cultural Arts Commission to advocate for arts related funding and activities and advise the Mayor and Council on programs and projects benefitting Rockville

4.1.4. HOC

4.2. Objective - Increase private sector giving

Recommendations

- 4.2.1. Increase individual philanthropy by articulating the value of and building excitement around culture and entertainment
- 4.2.2. Encourage local businesses to support culture and entertainment organizations and providers
- 4.2.3. Increase corporate sponsorships for City-sponsored events
- 4.2.4. Leverage public funds to stimulate more giving from the private sector
- 4.2.5. Recognize donors and other supporters for their contributions

4.3. Objective - Maintain or increase public sector funding

Recommendations

- 4.3.1. Assess the City of Rockville's investment in culture and entertainment and recommend changes in programming and funding to remain innovative, relevant, strategic, and competitive
- 4.3.2. Identify strategies to grow public funding and support for culture and entertainment in Rockville, including naming rights, contribution check-off boxes on bills, and state and local tax incentives for giving
- 4.3.3. Maintain multi-year funding strategies such as the Art in Public Places (AIPP) program, the Art in Public Architecture (AIPA) ordinance and the Publicly Accessible Art in Private Development (AIPD) ordinance
- 4.3.4. Seek non-monetary and in-kind support for culture and entertainment programs
- 4.3.5. Research, identify and apply for available grants

Appendix A - Contributors to the Culture and Entertainment Plan

Focus Groups and personal interviews were held with the following organizations early in the development of this plan. The information and recommendations obtained from these meeting was instrumental in the development of this document.

Arts, Cultural, Heritage and Entertainment Organizations

Maryland State Arts Council

Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County

Montgomery County's Heritage Area

Sister Cities

Performing Arts Groups

- Rockville Little Theatre
- Rockville Musical Theatre
- Victorian Lyric Opera Company
- HST Cultural Arts
- The Musical Theater Center
- Round House Theatre
- Rockville Concert Band
- Rockville Chorus
- Rockville Civic Ballet
- Rockville Regional Youth Orchestra
- The Finest! Youth Performance Troupe
- Potomac Valley Youth Orchestra

Visual Arts Groups

- VisArts at Rockville
- Rockville Art League

Literary Arts

- F. Scott Fitzgerald Literary Conference, Inc.
- Friends of the Library of Montgomery County
- Rockville Library
- Twinbrook Library

Historical

- Peerless Rockville
- Montgomery County Historical Society
- Lincoln Park Historical Foundation

Educational

Montgomery College, Rockville Campus

Montgomery County Public Schools

Business and Economic Development Groups

Rockville Economic Development Inc.

Rockville Chamber of Commerce

Regional Chambers of Commerce

Science and Technology Community
Visitor & Tourism Bureaus

Community Groups
House Concert Community
Churches

Sports / Recreation Organizations

Surrounding Governments

Appendix B - Rockville's Existing Culture and Entertainment Inventory

Performing Arts

Rockville Civic Ballet
Rockville Concert Band
Rockville Chorus
Rockville Regional Youth Orchestra
The Finest! Youth Performance Troupe
Rockville Little Theatre
Rockville Musical Theatre
Victorian Lyric Opera Company
The Musical Theatre Center
HST Cultural Arts
Dawn Crafton Dancers
American Dance Institute
National Philharmonic
Indian Dance Education Association (IDEA)
Coral Cantigas
Chinese School
Raices de Borinquen

Visual Arts

Glenview Mansion Art Gallery
Rockville Art League
VisArts at Rockville
Montgomery College—Rockville Art Department
Strathmore Concert Hall—Strathmore Fine Art
Jewish Community Center Goldman Gallery

Literary Arts

F. Scott Fitzgerald Literary Conference
Friends of the Libraries
Aspen Hill Library
Rockville Library
Twinbook Library

Performing Arts Facilities

F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre
Montgomery College Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center
Round House Theatre (Bethesda)
Art Barn (Gaithersburg)
Strathmore Concert Hall (Bethesda)
BlackRock Center for the Arts (Germantown)
Olney Theatre Center (Olney)

Historical

Peerless Rockville
Rockville Cemetery
Beall-Dawson House
Montgomery County Historical Society
Lincoln Park Historical Society *Foundation*
The Stonestreet Museum of 19th Century Medicine

Commercial

10,000 Villages
Appalachian Springs
As Kindred Spirits
Artisans Gallery (Gaithersburg)
Waygoose (Bethesda)

Private Entertainment Events

Rockville Town Square
Regal Cinemas
Congressional Plaza
House Concerts

Restaurants (Concerts, Open Mic., etc.)

Austin Grill
Pot Bellies
Branded 72
Outta the Way Café
Timpanos

